

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL Leningrad

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2152

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L Leningrad 0567

EO 11652GDS

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJ: WILL ROMANOV GO TO MOSCOW?

REF: Leningrad 0051

1. THE CURRENT TALK ABOUT TOWN IS THAT Leningrad PARTY BOSS ROMANOV IS LIKELY TO "LEAVE FOR MOSCOW" WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. SOURCES OPINE THAT ROMANOV'S ELEVATION TO FULL POLITBURO MEMBERSHIP HAS MADE HIM "TOO VALUABLE" FOR THE Leningrad BAILIWICK, CITE THE LIKELIHOOD OF TOP LEVEL SHUFFLES NOW THAT CONTINUITY CONGRESS NUMBER TWENTY-FIVE IS IN THE RECORD BOOKS, AND POINT OUT THAT ROMANOV'S REPORTED ABILITIES HAVE FASHIONED A SMOOTHLY-RUNNING Leningrad PARTY MACHINE WHICH CAN NOW BE BEQUEATHED TO ANOTHER Leningrad PARTY STALWART. SPECULATION FOCUSES MOSTLY ON B.I. ARISTOV, PRESENTLY FIRST SECRETARY OF THE CITY PARTY ORGANIZATION.

2. THE SPECULATION BEGS THE QUESTION OF WHAT RESPONSIBILITIES ROMANOV MIGHT ASSUME AT THE CENTRAL LEVEL. THE FOLLOWING SLOTS CROP UP, ALTHOUGH NO ONE HERE IS CLAIMING TO HAVE THE SLIGHTEST INSIGHT INTO THEIR ACTUAL AVAILABILITY. (A) REPLACE KOSYGIN AS PREMIER; THE "PRO" FOR THIS IS ROMANOV'S MANAGERIAL EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE; THE "CON" IS FACT THAT HE IS NEW BOY ON THE BLOCK AND UNLIKELY TO JUMP DIRECTLY INTO RULING TRIUMVIRATE; (B) REPLACE THE AGING PEL'SHE AS CHAIRMAN OF THE PARTY CONTROL COMMITTEE; THE PRO IS CONSIDERED TO BE ROMANOV'S "OBJECTIVE" BACKGROUND AS MAN RELATIVELY UNTOUCHED BY KREMLIN-LEVEL JOCKEYING FOR POSITION;
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THE CON IS FACT THAT ROMANOV'S FORTE IS MANAGERIAL LEADERSHIP RATHER THAN PURE PARTY AFFAIRS; (C) TAKE OVER ONE OF THE SEATS ON THE

SECRETARIAT: THIS VARIANT OFFERS THE ADVANTAGE OF OCCUPYING A CENTRAL POSITION OF AUTHORITY, PERHAPS WITH SPECIFIC BEAT IN AREAS OF INDUSTRY AND MANAGEMENT; AND (D), A WILD-CARD THOUGHT THAT ROMANOV MIGHT BE TAGGED TO REPLACE ANDROPOV AS HEAD OF THE KGB: THE REASONING ON THIS (ONE INDIVIDUAL) SAW IT AS A POSSIBILITY ONLY IF ANDROPOV WERE TO RETIRE HONORABLY OR TAKE ON OTHER CENTRAL RESPONSIBILITIES, WITH ROMANOV'S SUITABILITY FOR THE JOB REVOLVING AROUND HIS "CLEAN HANDS" AND PRESUMED LACK OF BUREAUCRATIC ENEMIES; IN OTHER WORDS, THE LEAST OBJECTIONABLE CANDIDATE FOR THIS SENSITIVE POST.

3. CONGEN VENTURES NO PREDICTIONS ON THE LIKELIHOOD OF ROMANOV'S RECEIVING ONE OF THE POSITIONS SPECULATED ABOVE, BUT WE PASS THEM ON AS INDICATION OF LENINGRAD GOSSIP ON SUBJECT. IN CURRENT FOREIGN SERVICE PERSONNEL TERMS, WE DO NOT RPT NOT BELIEVE THAT ANY OF OUR CONTACTS HAVE ACCESS TO MICROFICHE PANEL BOOKS ON KREMLIN POSITIONS.

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